

Golden 191

Chapter 191 The Crazy Stone (Part 1)

Someone shouted that the stone was being cut, and suddenly hundreds of people swarmed around Yang Hao's stall, completely surrounding it. People were still desperately trying to push their way in. If the event security hadn't arrived in time, Yang Hao's stall might have collapsed from the crush.

The third brother, Zhang Rong, and his wife were originally on the innermost layer along with Zhuang Rui. They were almost squeezed out just now. No one respects the elderly or cares for the young these days. If the third brother and Zhuang Rui hadn't been strong enough, they probably would have been squeezed into some corner long ago.

"Sir, would you like to wipe it first, or cut it directly?"

Seeing that the situation was under control, Yang Hao wiped the cold sweat from his forehead and turned to ask the middle-aged man.

"Boss, you have to help me move the stones over there eventually..." the middle-aged man replied.

"That's...that's..."

After hearing the middle-aged man's reply, Yang Hao called his younger brother and the middle-aged man together to move the nearly 200-pound rough stone to the stone-cutting machine. Judging from the middle-aged man's actions, it seemed that he was going to cut it directly. In fact, gambling on cracks is about whether there will be green underneath the cracks, and rubbing the stone is not very meaningful.

"Zhuang Rui, is it true that jadeite is taken from these stones?"

Seeing the enthusiastic crowd around her, Zhang Rong leaned against the third brother and asked Zhuang Rui. She was a little incredulous that such exquisite and translucent jade could actually be extracted from these ugly-looking stones.

"Of course, you'll find out soon enough. This jade gambling is very addictive. You'll have to keep a close eye on your husbands from now on."

Zhuang Rui replied with a smile that he knew this rough stone would yield jadeite, and the middle-aged man had probably made a profit by buying it for 850,000 yuan.

The stone-cutting machine was right next to the stall. While Zhuang Rui and Zhang Rong were talking, the three of them were basically ready.

After placing the rough stone on the stone-cutting machine, Yang Hao wiped his sweat and asked the middle-aged man, "Boss, are you planning to cut it yourself, or do you want to find a master craftsman?"

At this jade auction, many experienced stone cutters were present, specializing in cutting and polishing stones for clients. These masters are highly skilled, possessing excellent control over the cutting force. They can stop cutting promptly after the green color appears, avoiding damage to the jade inside. Hiring them to cut your stones costs very little.

"No need, I can do it myself. When I'm cutting it, could you pour some water on it for me?"

The middle-aged man waved his hand, indicating that he would operate the machine himself. He seemed to be an experienced stone gambler. After instructing Yang Hao to align the cut surface of the stone with the crack, the middle-aged man walked to the stone cutting machine.

The once noisy stalls suddenly fell silent, with only some noise coming from the stalls in the distance. But around this stall, the people watching the stone cutting held their breath, their eyes fixed on the rough stone under the stone cutting machine.

"Hey, why am I feeling a little nervous? This stone isn't even mine..."

The third brother's voice drew several disgruntled glances, as if the middle-aged man's failure to cut the stone was all his fault. In fact, the onlookers all felt the same way. It was like playing poker; before a high-stakes game was revealed, both the spectators and the players would feel nervous.

"Third Brother, that's the allure of jade gambling. One cut could turn a stone into something worth millions, or it could become worthless. It's a game for the rich," Zhuang Rui explained casually to his third brother. Little did Zhuang Rui realize that he had already stepped into this game himself.

While the group was talking, the middle-aged man continued to observe the cracks, his face full of tension. It seemed that 850,000 yuan was not a small amount for him. After about five minutes, the middle-aged man put his hand on the stone-cutting machine and finally prepared to cut the stone.

With the "snap-snap" sound of the saw gears rubbing against the stone, although it was impossible to see what was happening inside from such a distance, the onlookers were still on tenterhooks, their eyes fixed on the spot where the saw teeth were cutting.

"Hiss..."

Suddenly, the middle-aged man lifted the saw teeth on the stone cutting machine. The idle saw teeth made a "hissing" sound, and everyone thought that the jade had been found, so the crowd immediately stirred.

"Water it..."

The middle-aged man gave an order, and Yang Hao, who was waiting nearby, quickly used a spray bottle to wash away the debris around the cut. The middle-aged man took a small brush and carefully removed the stone fragments from the cut. Then he squatted down and examined it carefully, but his expression was obviously not very good.

Zhuang Rui watched from the side and chuckled inwardly. Cutting down from this crack would be a waste of time. Even if the rough stone were split in two, not a single trace of green would come out.

"It looks like it was cut off."

"Yes, the risk of a breakup is very high."

"Don't talk nonsense. The stone hasn't been cut open yet. Even a god wouldn't know if it will rise or fall. Maybe there's some green on the side."

Immediately, the crowd of onlookers began to discuss the matter. These people were jade merchants from all over the country, and they were very experienced in gambling on jade stones. They all offered their opinions, saying all sorts of things.

"Alright, stop arguing, we're starting to cut the stone again."

As the middle-aged man stood up, his expression very solemn, Zhuang Rui keenly noticed that the man's usually steady hands were now trembling slightly as he gripped the stone-cutting machine. Clearly, the man was not optimistic about the cut he had made and might already be regretting it.

Seemingly having made up his mind, the middle-aged man turned on the stone-cutting machine and, without further hesitation, used force to cut directly down. With a "snap snap" sound, the entire rough stone was split in two.

"well....."

A huge sigh came from the surrounding crowd. Clearly, there was no green on either side of the cut surface of the rough stone. Generally, when gambling on a cracked stone, the gamble is on how deep the crack is. If no jadeite is found where the crack goes, it is basically useless. The current situation shows that this stone has been a lost gamble.

"Impossible, this is impossible! How could a rough stone with a mottled outer layer not have a single trace of green?"

The middle-aged man couldn't believe what he was seeing. He forgot to turn off the stone-cutting machine in his hand and kept muttering to himself. Behind his glasses, his eyes, looking at the rough stones on the ground, revealed nothing but disbelief.

"Eight hundred thousand just vanished like that?"

Not only the middle-aged people, but also the couple next to Zhuang Rui were stunned. That was 800,000 RMB! Even if they didn't eat or drink and earned their entire lives' wages, they wouldn't necessarily have that much. And in just a few minutes, it had vanished into thin air.

"We can still gamble with the remaining materials..." Zhuang Rui said softly.

"Why would you gamble on it? There's no green even in the cracked area, it's just a piece of waste material, who would want to spend money to gamble on it?"

A man next to Zhuang Rui chimed in, and several others nodded in agreement. This was the cruelty of gambling on stones: if you find green jade, your value will increase a hundredfold, but if you gamble and fail, you'll be worthless immediately.

Zhuang Rui's heart stirred upon hearing this, but he said nothing and continued to watch the middle-aged man in the arena.

The middle-aged man finally came to his senses. His face was ashen. He bent down and almost pressed his glasses against the cut surface of the half of the raw material, carefully observing the white crystalline substance on the surface. After a long while, he shook his head dejectedly and sat down heavily on the muddy ground.

"The part of the raw material with pine-flower patterns can still be wiped clean."

Yang Hao whispered a reminder from the side: if the first piece of raw jade on the stall fails, it will have a significant impact on Yang Hao's subsequent sales.

Yang Hao's words seemed to remind the middle-aged man, who quickly got up. Without Yang Hao's help, his somewhat thin body actually lifted the half of the rough stone, which weighed seventy or eighty pounds, onto the stone-cutting machine, and the flame of hope rekindled in his eyes.

This attempt to polish the stone also ended in failure. They had polished down a layer of five or six centimeters from the pine flower area, but still no green appeared. At this point, another huge sigh came from the crowd, and some people had already turned and left.

The middle-aged man was still somewhat unwilling to give up. After looking at the cut surface of the rough stone for a while, he turned it over and made another cut from the cut surface, cutting the rough stone, which was originally divided into two pieces, into three sections.

"It's green! It's green!"

After making the first cut, the middle-aged man couldn't wait to look at the cut surface of the rough jade and shouted loudly. However, his voice gradually became quieter. Among the people present, only Zhuang Rui knew the reason. This cut had revealed some scattered jadeite under the pine flower pattern, but it couldn't be connected into a line and was still not worth much.

"The texture is alright, but the translucency is just average. It barely reaches the level of dry green jadeite, but without a good surface, it won't be a complete jadeite. You won't be able to extract much jadeite from it."

Upon hearing the middle-aged man's shout, the people in the circle stepped forward to examine the cross-section. After a while, they all shook their heads and left.

At this moment, a jade merchant who had originally been watching the spectacle spoke up: "My friend, I'll offer 50,000 yuan for this half of your rough jade that has green inside. How about it, are you selling it or not?" Judging from the appearance of the cut surface, this rough jade could be mined to make some pendants.

Upon hearing this, the middle-aged man raised his head. He simply didn't have the courage to cut any further. Judging from the appearance of the cut surface, it was unlikely that he would find any clustered jade inside. This time, he had lost everything in the gambling on jade.

"Three dollars, all 100,000 dollars are yours."

The middle-aged man was able to take things in stride. After calming down for a while, he emerged from the shadow of failure, gathered the three pieces of raw jade together, and said to the jade merchant who had offered him a price, "Since I've already lost money, I might as well make back what I can."

Upon hearing this, the jade merchant carefully examined the three rough stones. He set aside the one that had been cut open a second time and was covered in grayish-white crystals on one side. Then, pointing to the remaining two rough stones, he said to the middle-aged man, "I only want these two, for 60,000 yuan."

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The jade merchant offered a fair price. From this rough green jadeite, he estimated that at most only some jadeite suitable for pendants could be extracted, worth around fifty to sixty thousand yuan. He was willing to spend an extra thirty thousand yuan to buy the other half, essentially gambling that it might contain some green jadeite.

It's important to understand that there are three types of people at this Pingzhou jade trade fair. One type is like Song Jun, who doesn't cut or clean the stones, but only buys and hoards the good-looking rough stones, waiting for the price of raw stones to rise. The second type is represented by the middle-aged man in front of us, who comes specifically to gamble on stones. If he wins, his net worth will multiply, but if he loses, he may end up heavily in debt.

Another type of person is the jade merchant who just made the offer. They are usually the end consumers of jade products for ordinary people. Of course, most of these jade merchants also have their own jade carving and processing factories. They are also the biggest consumers of these raw materials after they are transformed into jadeite.

So, wherever news spreads that someone is cutting stones, people flock to it, and if the bet goes up, they'll shout out prices on the spot. You see, because the Myanmar government restricts the export of raw stones, many jade shops in the country are facing a shortage of raw materials. So, generally, as long as the rough stones that are cut aren't from the worst quality, they'll be snapped up by these jade merchants. After all, jade is divided into different grades, each with its own consumer group.

Perhaps the jade merchant's price was fair, because after waiting a while and seeing that no one else was willing to make an offer, the middle-aged man nodded and said, "How about 60,000 yuan? You can take these two pieces."

After hearing this, the man who looked like a jade merchant waved his hand, and a young man carrying a black bag squeezed through, took out six bills of money still sealed by the bank, and handed them to the middle-aged man. The middle-aged man looked very unhappy. He took the money, didn't count it, and stuffed it directly into his bag. Looking at the piece of rough jade on the ground that still belonged to him, his face was uncertain.

Just as the middle-aged man stood there hesitating, Zhuang Rui stepped forward and asked, "Brother, are you still selling the remaining raw jade?"

Zhuang Rui's words drew a chorus of boos from the surrounding crowd. Even the middle-aged man was somewhat astonished. These jade merchants, though willing to spend lavishly on rough stones, only bought those that would yield green jade. A piece like the one on the ground, with no green visible on either side of the cut, was essentially waste; these merchants wouldn't spend a single penny on such a piece.

The middle-aged man stared blankly at the rough stone because he didn't know what to do with it. Throwing it away seemed a waste, but continuing to cut it was too much for him to bear. It was clearly waste material, yet he still wanted to cut it.

"Sell it, of course I'll sell it! Forty thousand yuan, take it or leave it."

As soon as the middle-aged man finished speaking, the boos from the crowd grew even louder. They were treating Zhuang Rui like a sucker. However, judging from Zhuang Rui's behavior of wanting to buy this scrap, this man probably wasn't very shrewd.

"Youngest brother, are you crazy? These are all broken stones, why are you still buying them?" The third brother, who was standing nearby, got anxious and quickly stopped him.

"Okay, I won't buy it. It's all scrap material. Why are you selling it for 40,000? You can keep it for yourself."

Zhuang Rui threw down a remark in annoyance, parted the crowd behind him, and made as if to leave.

"Hey, young man, the price is negotiable. How much do you want to buy it for?" The middle-aged man became anxious when he saw Zhuang Rui about to leave. If Zhuang Rui didn't buy this rough stone, he would have been willing to throw it away. Now that he could make some money, how could he let this opportunity pass by?

"Five thousand yuan. If you sell it, I'll cut it up for fun. If not, forget it," Zhuang Rui said casually.

"Young man, five thousand yuan is more than half a year's salary for your older brother."

The third brother had lived in the same dormitory as Zhuang Rui for four years and knew him well. Seeing that Zhuang Rui really wanted to buy it, he didn't try to dissuade him, but just muttered to himself.

"Hey, Third Brother, any rough stone in this area would cost more than five thousand. I'll pay you guys five thousand to see how to cut it, that's a bargain. Are you selling it or not? If not, I'm leaving.

Zhuang Rui chuckled upon hearing the third brother's words. He glanced up and saw the middle-aged man still hesitating, so he urged him on.

"Ten thousand, ten thousand yuan is yours. I've already spent 850,000 yuan, so I won't miss this five thousand." The middle-aged man gritted his teeth and offered ten thousand yuan.

"Fine, I'm too lazy to argue with you."

Zhuang Rui took out 10,000 yuan from his handbag and threw it to the middle-aged man. Ignoring the contemptuous looks from those around him, he bent down and picked up the rough stone and moved it aside, because the jade merchant who was going to buy the other two rough stones was about to cut them.

"That kid is just crazy. He'd rather go pick up a rock from the roadside and cut it than spend ten thousand yuan to sell a piece of scrap."

"Yes, these young people nowadays are so arrogant, thinking that any rough stone can turn into jade."

"That kid's probably going to be cut open soon, let's stay and watch the show."

Zhuang Rui got tired of standing, so he simply sat down on the cut surface of the rough jade he had bought. All he could hear were these comments. Lao San was too embarrassed to stand next to Zhuang Rui, and as a result, he was also looked down upon by others.

"Damn it, if it turns green later, I won't sell it to you for a penny less." Zhuang Rui was also very unhappy. He was willing to spend money, so what business was it of these people's?

That middle-aged man was incredibly unlucky. When he made his first cut, he was still seven or eight centimeters away from the jadeite. If he had cut the rough stone in half at that moment, he definitely would have been able to extract the jadeite from it.

However, the middle-aged man deliberately turned the rough stone to the side and made a cut from the side of the mottled surface. His intention was good, as he was afraid of damaging the jadeite behind the mottled surface. But coincidentally, that cut went right through the edge of this dry green jadeite. Zhuang Rui had just looked closely and the cut surface was less than two centimeters away from the jadeite. If the middle-aged man's hand had trembled even slightly, Zhuang Rui might not have been able to get his hands on this rough stone.

What you couldn't buy for 800,000 yuan, you can now get for 10,000 yuan. At this moment, Zhuang Rui fully understands the meaning of the old saying, "What is destined to be yours will be yours, and what is not, you cannot force."

"Sigh, I messed it up again..."

Just as Zhuang Rui was making his own calculations, the jade merchant who had bought two pieces of rough jade had already cut open the other piece. Zhuang Rui didn't even need to look to know that there was nothing inside that half of the rough jade; the 30,000 yuan was essentially wasted.

However, the jade merchant then cut open the rough stone that had yielded green jade and rubbed it down from the mottled part, and surprisingly found two pieces of jade the size of a baby's fist. This made the merchant's tense face relax a little. With just these two pieces of jade, the 60,000 yuan was already considered breaking even. If the carving master handled it properly, there might even be a small profit.

"Brother Zhuang, why don't you pick out a piece of rough jade and have it cut open? Don't worry, I'll definitely give you the cheapest price."

The crowd that had gathered around the stall had mostly dispersed, and only a handful of people went into Yang Hao's raw material area to select and purchase raw materials. Even several of the people who had originally been looking at raw materials had left, clearly affected by the recent gambling disaster.

People who gamble on rough stones are very superstitious. If you win big at your stall, people will flock to you to buy rough stones. If you lose big, the situation will naturally reverse.

Zhuang Rui stood up, patted the back of his pants, and pointed to the rough stone on the ground, saying, "Hey, I just bought a rough stone. Even though it's scrap, it might turn into jade."

"Brother Zhuang, please stop joking with me. I'll point you to a better piece of jade. You can buy it and cut it open in front of everyone. Consider it a favor to me."

Yang Hao thought Zhuang Rui was joking and became a little anxious. Today was the first day of the jade gambling conference, and the rough stones sold had already been ruined. Putting aside whether it would affect business, this was also an unlucky omen.

"Why would I joke with you when I have nothing better to do? I've already bought this rough stone, so of course I have to cut it open and see. Do you think I have so much money that I'd just throw away ten thousand yuan like that?" Zhuang Rui replied irritably. He didn't know how these people identified jadeite rough stones, and why they were all so convinced that there was no jadeite in this piece of rough stone.

"Fine, go ahead and cut it, but make sure it's quiet."

Seeing that Zhuang Rui had made up his mind, Yang Hao had no choice but to let him keep quiet. He told Zhuang Rui to keep a low profile because he was afraid that if he was surrounded by onlookers again, his business would be ruined, which would be another blow to his business.

"Okay, it's just a few of us brothers cutting stones for fun. Third Brother, call Wei Ge and the others, and tell them to come to stall number 83. We're about to cut some stones."

Zhuang Rui patted the shoulder of Lao San, who was looking at the rough stone over and over, and gestured for him to call Wei Ge and the others over. He then carried the rough stone, which weighed about fifty or sixty pounds, and placed it on the stone-cutting machine.

Less than five minutes after the third brother made the call, Brother Wei, Brother Yue Jing, and the fourth brother appeared out of nowhere, arm in arm. Brother Yue Jing was holding a piece of raw jade the size of a fist. As soon as he saw Zhuang Rui, he said like he was showing off a treasure, "Brother, I bought a piece of raw jade. What do you think?"

"How much did you buy it for?"

Zhuang Rui took the raw material while asking questions. It was quite heavy, probably weighing three to five pounds.

"Hehe, I bought it for three hundred yuan. I listened to you and didn't dare to buy anything more expensive. So, do you think there's any jade inside this rough stone?" Brother Yue looked at Zhuang Rui with hopeful eyes.

"Well, Second Brother, someone here just cut a rough stone worth 850,000 yuan, but only got 60,000 to 70,000 yuan worth of jadeite out of it. They lost more than 700,000 yuan. So, you shouldn't have too high hopes for this stuff. Just treat it as a hobby."

When Zhuang Rui was looking at it, he casually scanned the rough stone with his spiritual energy. There was no sign of green, it was just an ordinary piece of weathered ore with its skin intact. He just didn't want to dampen Yue Jing's enthusiasm, so he spoke in a gentle way.

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"Youngest brother, you mean there's nothing left inside this stone, right?" The second brother's face fell immediately upon hearing Zhuang Rui's words.

"No one can say for sure, Second Brother. There's a stone-cutting machine over there. Why don't you just put it on and cut it once?" Zhuang Rui replied with a smile. For rough stones like the one his second brother bought, it's rare to find one that turns out green even among 100 pieces.

"Sure, it's just three hundred yuan..."

Yue Jing, unwilling to accept defeat, snatched the rough stone from Zhuang Rui's hand and walked towards the stone cutting machine, muttering to himself.

"Damn, this is faster than losing money playing cards!"

After Zhuang Rui taught him how to use it, the second brother was a simpleton and didn't care about the patterns or anything like that. He just cut it in half, picked it up, and naturally there was nothing there.

"Second brother, move aside, I need to untie this stone too." Zhuang Rui patted his second brother's shoulder, signaling him to make way.

"By the way, brother, you wouldn't let us brothers buy expensive things, but you spent ten thousand to buy a piece of scrap without our permission."

The third brother had already told them about Zhuang Rui buying the rough stones, and these guys were already complaining that they hadn't been called when the stones were being cut earlier.

"I'm the chairman of the jade gambling foundation you appointed. Do I need to ask you guys, these irrelevant people, for permission to buy a rough stone? Second brother, how about I give you the chairman's position?" Zhuang Rui joked.

"Come on, a 50,000 yuan fund? I don't even want it. Alright, hurry up and go cut the stone. As we agreed before, if we lose money, it's all yours anyway." The second brother completely ignored Zhuang Rui's words. Having been a junior leader for over a year, he was always right no matter what Zhuang Rui said.

After securing the rough stone, Zhuang Rui thought for a moment and said very seriously, "No, brothers, let me make this clear first: we bought this rough stone together, so whether we make a profit or a loss, we all have to split the cost equally. Otherwise, I won't understand."

Although the five brothers had an exceptionally good relationship, these days it's common for fathers and sons to turn against each other and even for brothers to fight over money. Zhuang Rui said this because he didn't want anyone to have a grudge after the jade was cut open, otherwise he would have done something wrong with good intentions.

Yue Jing was very dissatisfied with Zhuang Rui's words and said, "Alright, youngest brother, why are you taking this so seriously? If there's nothing inside that stone, then the money is yours, okay?"

"Hehe, I'm afraid those few won't agree."

These guys weren't concerned about money, so Zhuang Rui felt relieved. He picked up the grinding wheel and prepared to polish the stone first. Once the surface of the rough stone was removed, it was basically all jade inside. If he cut it, it would destroy its internal structure. He could only polish out the green little by little.

It's been more than two hours since the opening of the jade gambling convention, but most of the people who came today are from the industry. They are mostly asking about prices and looking at stones, and not many are actually buying. There are a few people cutting stones, but their luck is similar to that of middle-aged people, and they have all lost money gambling. So when Zhuang Rui is about to polish a stone, a group of people swarm around him again.

The flow of people in the venue was very large. Although the news that booth number 83 had gone bankrupt had spread throughout the venue, only about a hundred people had actually seen it. They had all wandered off to who knows where by now. The people watching now were all newcomers, and not many of them knew that the rough stone Zhuang Rui was about to polish was scrap material that he had bought for 10,000 yuan.

"Young man, this rough stone has already been cut. There's no green inside the windows on either side, so it's basically waste. Is it even worth polishing?" Among the crowd were many experts in jade gambling. A small old man in his fifties, standing next to the stone cutting machine, raised his question.

"Hehe, sir, we brothers just bought some rough jade that someone else had cut up to practice with. It's not worth much anyway," Zhuang Rui replied casually.

Upon hearing this, the old man's face immediately showed disappointment. As he prepared to leave, he found that the area behind him was crowded with people. Helpless, he could only wait for Zhuang Rui to finish wiping the stone before he could go out.

"Why bother rubbing a stone like this? Just cut it in half and you're done."

"Yeah, it's a waste of our time."

Those at the very back of the circle felt cheated and began to speak up.

"Dude, I didn't call you guys to come and see..." Zhuang Rui ignored these people, turned on the grinding wheel, and started rubbing the side of the jade that was about seven or eight centimeters away from it.

Zhuang Rui didn't cut in and rub in a straight line; instead, he rubbed out a small window, pushing in layer by layer, because he knew that white mist would appear at the edge of the jade.

After the first few people relayed the news, the onlookers realized that the piece of material was worthless and became impatient. The people on the outermost edge of the circle had already left, and the rest of the people were discussing their own experiences that day, with no one paying any attention to the material.

Zhuang Rui rubbed the stone very slowly. He would wash the surface with clean water after rubbing it in only a centimeter or two. After the third wash, a small crystal in the shape of white mist appeared in front of everyone.

"Huh? It's fogging up?"

The old man, with his sharp eyes, spotted the white mist immediately. Ignoring the rapidly spinning grinder in Zhuang Rui's hand, he leaned closer to examine it closely.

"Not bad, young man, keep rubbing. Judging from this, there's a good chance it will turn green." After looking at it for a few minutes, the old man said to Zhuang Rui with a serious expression.

As everyone knows, rough stones that can truly yield jadeite all have an outer layer of skin. Underneath this skin is usually a layer of mist, and the fresh jadeite is located beneath the mist. Rough stones with mist are generally not far from yielding green jadeite. Of course, not all rough stones will have mist, and the presence of mist does not guarantee that the jadeite will yield green jadeite. These are all based on the experience of our predecessors. However, the probability of a rough stone with mist yielding green jadeite is quite high.

"Hey old man up ahead, how's the fog doing?"

At this moment, news of the fog breaking out spread among the crowd, and the previous noise immediately disappeared. They were all experts and naturally knew what the fog meant. Some impatient people in the back shouted it out.

"The white mist has a slight green tinge, so there should be jadeite underneath. And the green of this jadeite is quite good. I can't say about the quality or clarity, but the green is definitely pure, vibrant, bright, and even. Not bad, young man, you've hit the jackpot with this piece."

Although Zhuang Rui hadn't yet detected any green, the old man, with his keen eye, had already described the jadeite inside with remarkable accuracy. Zhuang Rui secretly admired him; the dry green jadeite in this rough stone was indeed of average quality, but the green color was excellent and very vibrant.

"Young man, I heard you bought this rough jade for 10,000 yuan. I'll offer 100,000. Are you willing to sell?"

"Based on what Boss Qi said, this raw material is worth more than 100,000. Young man, I'll offer 150,000, how about it?"

The old man who was commenting on the rough stone seemed to be quite prestigious in the jade gambling circle. For a while, everyone was talking about it. It was only white mist with a hint of green, and people were already offering prices for Zhuang Rui. Of course, these people wanted to get a good deal. Once the green was revealed, the price would skyrocket.

"Hey, this...this has increased fifteenfold? Should we sell?"

The third brother had been following Zhuang Rui the whole time. He never expected that in the blink of an eye, a stone that was originally considered waste could be sold for 150,000 yuan. This made the third brother's relatively strong heart pound.

"Not selling? This is nothing..."

Zhuang Rui completely ignored the bidders, not even raising his head. The price should be ten times higher. He had priced the rough stone at 1.5 million in his mind. He was originally a little uneasy, afraid that no one would buy it after it was cut open. But judging from the current situation, he guessed that these people would be scrambling to buy it after it was cut open.

To be honest, Zhuang Rui was a novice. He didn't know much about the domestic jade market. Currently, the domestic jade jewelry industry is facing a shortage of raw materials. At this kind of national jade gambling conference, as long as you can find green jade, you don't have to worry about finding buyers. In order to ensure the supply of goods and retain customers, some jade companies offer prices for good-looking jade rough that are almost the same as the price of finished products, making only a small profit.

"Crazy people buy, crazy people sell, and crazy people are waiting"—this is the most accurate description of the jadeite rough stone gambling conference.

As the grinding wheel rubbed against the stone, a hint of green finally appeared on the edge of the rough stone. After a small window, about the size of a baby's palm, was created, Zhuang Rui stopped, took the tissue Zhang Rong handed him, and wiped the sweat from his forehead.

"Yang green, it's yang green, the color is pure and not wicked, not bad, not bad at all. It's a pity, if this water could reach the glassy level, this rough stone would be extraordinary..." It was the old man surnamed Qi who was the first to step forward to examine it. He shook his head as he looked at it, as if Zhuang Rui had ruined it.

"Young man, stop rubbing! If you keep rubbing, it might break. I'll offer you 300,000. Want to sell?"

"Four hundred thousand. Although the seed is dry green, jewelry made from this bright green seed is the best-selling. I'll offer four hundred thousand."

After several jade merchants came forward to examine the newly polished skylight, they all offered Zhuang Rui prices. Wei Ge and the others, who had never witnessed such a scene before, looked at each other in disbelief.

Bidding was incessant. In the short time it took Zhuang Rui to wipe his sweat and take a sip of water, the rough stone with only a small window cut into it had already risen to 600,000 RMB. A smile appeared on Zhuang Rui's face. It seemed that the price would not be low once the rough stone was made into a finished piece.

Yang Hao, who was standing next to Zhuang Rui serving him tea and water, was also full of excitement. Zhuang Rui's heart was moved, and he handed the grinder in his hand to Yang Hao, saying, "Brother Yang, please help me unravel this."

Chapter 194 The Crazy Stone (Part 4)

"Shall I solve it?"

Yang Hao was taken aback at first, then overjoyed. Zhuang Rui's request to cut this rough jade was a huge favor to him. The jade originated from his stall, and his handling of it would be the best form of publicity. Just as Zhuang Rui had revealed the green color, the onlookers were already asking about the jade's origin.

"Yes, if you rub along the green area to the side, I reckon the jade inside won't be small."

Although Zhuang Rui let Yang Hao handle the rough stone, he didn't want Yang Hao to cut it directly, so he still gave Yang Hao a word of advice.

"I know, let's peel off the outer skin first and see how it performs."

With Zhuang Rui trusting him so much, and so many people watching, Yang Hao naturally couldn't afford to mess things up; his method was the safest.

"Old man, you're a real genius! How did you know there would definitely be jade inside this stone?"

Seeing that Zhuang Rui had given up his spot to polish the stone, the group of guys eagerly surrounded him, offering him water and tobacco and even lighting it for him. They were being incredibly attentive. It was Wei Ge who, on behalf of the group, asked the question that had been on their minds.

"I don't know anything. You guys go around asking around, is there any old mine jadeite that sells for 10,000 yuan? I'm just looking for a cheap deal. If I find green jadeite, I'll make a profit. Even if we gamble it all away, we can still afford it."

Zhuang Rui naturally wouldn't tell the truth, but this reason put Wei Ge and the others at ease. They had just gone around and knew that a rough stone of this size would cost at least 100,000 yuan. If someone hadn't lost money gambling, they wouldn't have been able to buy this third of the rough stone for 10,000 yuan.

"Damn, so it was just a lucky break..."

Several people simultaneously gave Zhuang Rui the middle finger, put away their sweat towels, and extinguished their cigarettes before they could even be lit. Only the third brother was somewhat decent, but the Wanglaoji herbal tea he was about to offer was replaced with ordinary mineral water.

Zhuang Rui knew his friends were joking with him, so he didn't pay any attention and focused his attention on Yang Hao, who was preparing to cut the stone.

As expected of someone from a family of jade experts, Yang Hao, though about the same age as Zhuang Rui, had a wealth of experience in cutting stones, especially his hands, which were extremely steady as he held the grinding wheel and continuously scraped away the stone chips next to the skylight.

As the skylight grew larger, the pupils of the onlookers shrank, and everyone's attention was drawn to the hissing sound of the stone being scraped.

After about twenty minutes, Yang Hao stopped, covered in sweat. It wasn't that he didn't want to continue, but the sweat on his forehead was dripping into his eyes, and his hands were becoming unsteady from exerting force for so long. He had to stop and rest. Yang Jun, who was next to him, immediately handed him a slice of watermelon and used a wet towel to wipe his cousin's sweat.

Half of the rough stone has been cut open, revealing a piece of jade about half the size of a football. Fortunately, the jade now exposed has a very uniform color. The rich green color, under the sunlight, looks like a small grass just sprouting from the soil, showing its vitality.

"Young man, stop rubbing it. The edge is getting foggy again. It's a pity. If you had stopped earlier, this piece of rough jade would have been worth at least 1.5 million. Now it's probably worth at most 1.2 million."

Old Qi was the first to rush over and carefully examine the jadeite beneath the skin. From the perspective of gambling on jade, Yang Hao had just made a mistake because he failed to observe the white mist underneath.

However, Zhuang Rui didn't care, because he knew that if he brushed past another two or three centimeters, there would be more jadeite under the white mist. Moreover, on the other half, apart from a thin layer of skin only about two centimeters thick, it was all jadeite, and its volume was one-third larger than what was currently exposed.

"Young man, look at this rough stone. It's almost completely cut open. Are you planning to sell it? Old Qi just said it's worth 1.2 million. I'll offer 1.3 million now. How about it, sell it to me..."

A plump, fair-skinned middle-aged man squeezed through the crowd to Zhuang Rui's side, took out a lighter, clasped his hands together to light it for Zhuang Rui, and then quoted a price. Judging from the current appearance of the rough stone, the price offered by this plump merchant was quite fair.

"Where were you all just now? Of all the people who were looking down on me, your voice was the loudest..."

Zhuang Rui glanced at the fat man, slowly shook his head, and felt a surge of satisfaction. Now he wouldn't be offering any advice, would he?

"This piece of raw jade..."

Zhuang Rui spoke, and everyone pricked up their ears, but he stopped after saying just one sentence, causing everyone to curse inwardly.

After taking a sip of water, Zhuang Rui continued, "Of course we'll sell them, but since we've already gone this far, let's just sell them as clear cuts. If you're interested, please wait a little longer..."

"Same, same, but when you solve it, young man, you should consider me first."

In Guangdong, the outdoor temperature in June has already reached 35 degrees Celsius. Everyone is standing under the scorching sun. The chubby guy keeps wiping his sweat with a towel, saying nice things but cursing Zhuang Rui in his heart.

Can the price of a finished piece of jade be the same as that of a semi-finished piece? If it's cut open and sold as finished jade, the price will be transparent. Plus, there are quite a few people eyeing this piece of jade, so it won't be easy to get it for a lower price. At this moment, many of the onlookers are secretly cursing Zhuang Rui for being a sly fox.

"Brother Zhuang, this is fogging up. Should we cut it now or...?"

After resting for a while and recovering, Yang Hao looked at Zhuang Rui with some embarrassment. He knew that if he had stopped before the white mist appeared, the value of the rough stone would have been much higher. However, he had already been polishing it for more than ten minutes, and his attention was not as focused as it had been at the beginning, so some problems inevitably arose.

"It's alright, keep wiping. Let's put in a little more effort and see if there's any green behind this white mist."

Zhuang Rui's words drew a barrage of criticism from the crowd, who accused him of insatiable greed. The jadeite had already been polished from beneath the fog, yet he still expected to find green on the back as well. Several experts in jade gambling even wanted to bet with Zhuang Rui that if he could polish out green again, they might as well find a block of tofu and smash their heads against it.

"Okay, I'll do as you say."

Yang Hao stood up, picked up the grinding wheel again, and began to grind along the white mist. Perhaps he didn't have much hope, because he moved much faster than before. After grinding about three centimeters, a beautiful green appeared again at the edge where the grinding wheel touched the raw material.

"It's gone up...it's gone up..."

Yang Hao stopped the grinding machine, rinsed the green spot with water, and shouted loudly. The previously noisy crowd suddenly fell silent. A piece of material that was generally considered waste had actually made a profit twice in a row. This fact surprised many people who considered themselves experts in jade gambling.

"Wow, this is a huge increase! Yang Jun, go get the firecrackers..."

Yang Hao shouted in a slightly trembling voice. Although he was exhausted both physically and mentally, the rough jade in his hand was stimulating his nerves like a poppy. The white mist just now, and the bright green now, such ups and downs were something that ordinary people could not withstand.

Upon hearing his cousin's greeting, Yang Jun immediately squeezed through the crowd and returned with a tray of red paper firecrackers stacked several times. Yang Hao took the firecrackers, parted the crowd surrounding the tent, hung the firecrackers on a corner of the tent, and said to Zhuang Rui, "Brother Zhuang, you can light them."

Setting off firecrackers when the bet is successful has always been a tradition among raw jade merchants. The person who lights the firecrackers is usually the owner of the raw jade. There's a reason for this, just like dotting the eyes of the lion before a lion dance, it's a very honorable thing.

Zhuang Rui was unaware of the rules and casually stepped forward, lighting the firecrackers with his cigarette butt. Instantly, deafening firecracker sounds echoed throughout the entire venue.

Most of the guests invited to the opening ceremony today are from the jade gambling circle. Upon hearing the firecrackers, they naturally understood what was happening, put down the rough stones they were looking at, and followed the sound.

The stall, which originally had only a couple hundred people watching, was now completely packed with people, and those behind were still desperately trying to squeeze in. The purpose of these people coming here was to buy some better rough stones to take back. A successful gamble usually meant that there were rough stones for sale, so it would be strange if they didn't fight desperately.

Seeing that his stall was crowded with people, Yang Hao's face lit up with joy. He was no longer tired and took one last step to cut out Zhuang Rui's rough stone.

The rough jadeite now presented to everyone should be called a finished jadeite piece. Its mysterious veil has been lifted. The entire piece of jadeite is spherical, slightly larger than a football, with the green color distributed quite evenly. Under the sunlight, it looks like a jade watermelon.

Upon closer inspection, it can be seen that in the middle of this jadeite, there is a layer of white mist about two centimeters thick, which neatly divides the jadeite into two distinct halves.

Unfortunately, this piece of jadeite is a typical rough stone from the Baibi mine. While the color is pure, the translucency is average, and the transparency is not very good. It barely reaches the level of dry green jadeite. If it were icy jadeite, it would be worth at least tens of millions of yuan, and if it were glassy jadeite, it would probably be worth hundreds of millions of yuan.

"Young man, you're really lucky! You managed to cut such a large piece of jade out of a piece of scrap material. You just said that this jade will be sold. I'll offer two million RMB. What do you think?"

"I'll offer two million five hundred thousand..."

"Two million eight thousand..."

"I'll offer two and a half million, no, that doesn't sound right, two and a half million..."

The chubby man who had initially made the first offer was the first to call out a price again. However, before Zhuang Rui could reply, several merchants who had just finished examining the rough stones also called out their prices. The last man's bid caused a burst of laughter from the crowd.

Chapter 195 The Crazy Stone (Part 5)

Hearing the price being shouted like it was for buying cabbages, the third brother was completely dumbfounded. He stared blankly at Zhang Rong beside him and said, "Wife, are you sure they're shouting 2.55 million and not 255 yuan? No, this feels like a dream. Honey, pinch me..."

"Ouch, pinch me a little easier..." The third brother felt a sharp pain in his arm, which brought him back to his senses.

"I didn't pinch him." Zhang Rong was also shocked by the scene and had no time to pay attention to the third brother.

Standing behind the third brother, Wei Ge grinned mischievously and said, "Hehe, third brother, want me to pinch you again?"

"No, can't I just be easily swayed?" The third brother shoved away Wei Ge's outstretched hand.

Among Zhuang Rui's classmates, Wei Ge's family background goes without saying. Although his family is very strict, he wouldn't care about millions of dollars. As for Lao Si, he drives a Ferrari, so of course he wouldn't care about this amount of money either. Only Yue Jing and Lao San are a bit tight on money, and they are the ones who are most shocked.

Yue Jing's performance was much better than that of the third brother. Although he was quite shocked by the number, he also had relatives and elders in his family who were in business, and he had never lacked money since he was a child. He was just very curious about how this worthless stone had suddenly become so valuable.

The firecrackers set off by Yang Hao attracted more jade merchants, and the bidding became even more intense.

Although this piece of jadeite is of average quality and not considered high-grade, the first impression Chinese people have of jadeite is its green color. Therefore, jadeite with a pure, vibrant color is the most sought-after in the market. This piece has a rich, evenly distributed green color, making it a mainstay in the current market for both bracelets and pendants. Consequently, jade dealers are unwilling to give it up, and the prices they're asking for are steadily rising.

"Two million nine hundred and fifty thousand!"

The fair-skinned, chubby man who had appeared somewhat refined just moments before now looked like a gambler who had gone berserk, shouting out the highest bid in the room with his face flushed red.

In terms of the intrinsic value of this piece of jadeite, the price is already close to its peak. After all, dry green jadeite is only considered mid-range. Although the green color is very good and the price can be slightly higher, it is still mostly aimed at ordinary people with limited purchasing power.

After the plump merchant called out the price, the room fell silent. Everyone who was interested in getting their hands on this piece of jade was calculating the gains and losses in their minds. It didn't matter if they made a little less profit by buying the jade, but if they lost money, no one would want to make a move.

There are about twenty people bidding in the room. After 2.6 million, the price has been increasing by 10,000 at a time. However, this chubby businessman has raised the price from 2.9 million to 2.95 million in one go, and it seems that he is determined to get this jade.

Seeing that no one else was willing to bid, just as Zhuang Rui was about to agree, suddenly, Old Man Qi, who had been squatting on the ground examining the jade, stood up, held up three fingers, and said calmly, "I bid three million!!!"

Upon hearing Old Man Qi's offer, the plump merchant's wrinkle-free face immediately turned into a bitter expression. He said to Old Man Qi, "Brother Qi, your price is a bit too high. Can't you give me a break this time?"

"Brother Han, I just examined it carefully. If I were to make it myself, I could make about thirty bracelets from this piece of jade. Adding in ring faces, pendants, and other small items, it would be worth about three million. You know I don't have much stock left in my shop."

Old Qi had been squatting on the ground, calculating how many objects could be carved from this piece of jade. With his skill, buying it for three million should leave him with a slight profit, though the profit margin would be extremely thin.

"Alright, brother, I won't argue with you anymore. I'll buy it for 2.95 million, and I might even lose a little money. Forget it, this material is yours." The boss, Mr. Han, gave a wry smile and didn't bid any further.

"Hey, didn't that old man say this jade could be sold for over three million? How come this guy surnamed Han says he'll lose money if it's only two million nine hundred and fifty thousand?" Wei Ge nudged Zhuang Rui and asked in a low voice.

"Brother Wei, why don't you ask that old man? I don't know either." Zhuang Rui had no idea what was going on. As long as the goods were sold and the price was right, that was enough for him.

Yang Hao, who was standing to the side, replied, "That Boss Qi is a famous craftsman, a true successor of Yangzhou carving. Only a carving master like him can maximize the profit from this piece of jade. If an ordinary craftsman were to carve this piece of jade, some of it would probably be wasted."

Mr. Qi's offer of three million shocked many jade merchants in the room. They had all seen the jadeite and thought that if they bought it, they would probably have a hard time selling it for three million after it was made into a finished product. So, for a good three to five minutes, no one else in the room made a bid.

The stone gamble paid off, and the cut stones were sold. While Zhuang Rui and Boss Qi went to transfer the money, the crowd surrounding Yang Hao's stall gradually dispersed, and many people went to Yang Hao's stall to select raw stones. This was the popularity brought about by the successful gamble.

However, two people were still standing at the spot where the stone had just been cut. One was the thin, middle-aged man who had initially spent 850,000 yuan to buy the rough stone, with an indescribable expression on his face, whether he was crying or laughing. The other was the jade merchant who had bought the box and returned the pearl. Both of them stood in the center of the area for a long time before leaving.

From the moment Zhuang Rui made his bargain purchase to the moment the jade was unearthed, Zhang Rong, who had been present the whole time, saw the two men's dejected expressions and said with some heartache, "Honey, do you think those two will go crazy after such a blow?"

"Probably not?" the third brother replied uncertainly. If this happened to him, he didn't know if he would be driven crazy by the shock.

Yang Hao went to greet the merchants who were selecting raw materials. He knew that these people were all Zhuang Rui's friends, so he left his cousin Yang Jun to accompany them.

Upon hearing Zhang Rong's words, Yang Jun, who was standing next to her, curled his lip and said nonchalantly, "Definitely not. It's only a little over 800,000 yuan. As long as that person wins once, he'll make it all back. Gambling on stones is all about winning and losing. It's normal to have bad eyesight or bad luck."

Although young, Yang Jun, who comes from a family of jade enthusiasts, has a very high level of vision. In the jade gambling circle, people always report good news and not bad news. However, Yang Jun knows that there are far more people who have gone bankrupt because of gambling on jade than those who have become rich overnight.

Yang Jun was now convinced by Zhuang Rui. His older brother was right; this was definitely a lucky charm. Even buying a piece of material that was considered scrap could yield a three-million-yuan jade. It seemed that the story of him making thirty million yuan from eight thousand yuan in Nanjing was indeed true.

"Hey guys, you're all standing here like telephone poles, aren't you afraid of the heat?"

Zhuang Rui returned alone, swaying slightly. The jade he had been carrying was nowhere to be seen; it must have been taken away by Boss Qi after the transfer of funds.

"Hey kid, time to split the money, brothers, let's grab it!"

At Wei Ge's command, the four brothers surrounded Zhuang Rui like wolves and tigers, and their eight hands instantly searched all of Zhuang Rui's pockets.

"Damn it, don't touch it! Who hid the money there?!"

Someone's hand slipped into Zhuang Rui's pants pocket, and with a bit too much force, it went straight for Zhuang Rui's genitals.

"Go inside the shed, isn't it hot here?"

After joking around for a while, Zhuang Rui led the way into the shed. Yang Jun pulled out another watermelon from somewhere and cut it open. The guys had been baking in the sun for most of the day and were quite thirsty, so they each picked up a slice and started eating.

"Three million, split among six people, five hundred thousand each. Here, one card per person, the password is 123456, anonymous. You can transfer the money to your own cards at the bank when you have time."

He wiped the watermelon juice from his mouth, then took out six ICBC savings cards from his handbag and threw them on the table.

Although the guys were all quite excited, none of them reached for the cards on the table because they all felt that this distribution was a bit unfair. After all, the fact that they were able to solve the jade problem was all thanks to Zhuang Rui.

The third brother was silent for a moment before speaking up: "Hey, there are five of us, why did you get six cards? But it's fine this way, you can keep double the money, and we brothers can each take one of the rest."

Wei Ge and the others nodded in agreement. The so-called jade gambling fund they mentioned earlier was just a joke among the guys. No one took it seriously. A few million might not seem like a lot, but it wasn't a small amount either. Some ordinary families might not earn that much in their entire lives. Wei Ge and the others didn't want to let this money ruin their relationship.

Zhuang Rui ignored the third brother and looked at Zhang Rong, saying, "Sister-in-law, you should teach your third brother a lesson when you get back. He doesn't take you seriously at all. There are six of us, and he deliberately left you out. Tsk tsk, this matter..."

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui's words, the third brother immediately understood his meaning and hurriedly said, "Zhuang Rui, this is not appropriate, it's really not appropriate. We already feel ashamed to accept this money. No, absolutely not."

"Third brother, don't refuse. This is what we agreed on before. Besides, if you and your wife are better off financially, you won't make mistakes at work in the future. And second brother, I'll need your help when I go to Beijing."

Before the third brother could speak, Zhuang Rui picked up two cards and stuffed them into his hand, along with a jadeite rough stone transaction contract. With these, the one million in the third brother's hands would be legitimate.

Chapter 196 The Crazy Stone (Part Six)

Although the two bank cards were light and weightless, they felt incredibly heavy in Lao San's hands, making it hard for him to breathe. He knew Zhuang Rui was intentionally taking care of him, but the kindness was simply too heavy a burden.

"Alright, third brother, just take it. Stop being so fussy. The youngest brother is a capitalist now. I heard he even owns a mastiff kennel and a car repair shop. Don't be polite with him. If he has a big, healthy son, all of us brothers will be his godfathers."

When Yue Jing saw that Lao San's eyes were a little red, as if he had been moved by something, he quickly reached out and picked up a bank card from the table, exaggeratedly put it into his wallet, and then looked around, posing as if he were guarding against a thief. This amused everyone, and the originally somewhat solemn atmosphere immediately became lighthearted.

It's no wonder the third brother was excited. When Zhuang Rui received his first 3.8 million, his performance wasn't much better than the third brother's. It felt like winning the lottery, like being hit by a pie falling from the sky.

"Brother Zhuang, what are you doing sitting here?"

Zhuang Rui and his friends were chatting and eating watermelon when a voice broke in.

"Hey Ma, you're here too! How's it going, how's your haul?"

Zhuang Rui turned around and saw that Fatty Ma, covered in sweat, had just entered the shed with the girl. His T-shirt was already soaked with sweat.

Fatty Ma entered without any ceremony, grabbing a slice of watermelon from the table and starting to eat. He even offered one to Yanzi beside him. After finishing, he wiped his mouth and said, "Don't even mention it, today was incredibly unlucky. My jade gambling master must have eaten something bad last night; he's been vomiting and having diarrhea this morning. I had to take him to the hospital for an IV drip. I came here to wander around by myself."

Good rough stones are usually reserved for sealed bids, and the stone gambling conference will not open sealed bids for another three days. Fatty Ma is not in a hurry. There are still two days after today. His main focus is still on the sealed bids, because most of the rough stones in the sealed bids are rough stones that have been opened and have shown good performance, which are most suitable for stockpiling.

"With your eyesight, brother, what need do you have for 'eyes'? Just look for yourself..." Zhuang Rui knew that Fatty Ma had an exceptionally sharp eye, so he said this.

"Brother, everyone has their own expertise. Someone like me, who is only half-full of knowledge, is most likely to be misled and suffer losses."

Fatty Ma is right. When he used to collect antiques, he could tell whether an antique was real or fake from the seller's demeanor. But with jadeite rough, even the seller didn't know if there was jadeite inside. So Fatty Ma was helpless.

"By the way, bro, is this stall number 83? I just came in and heard people saying that the betting here is booming, so I rushed over to check it out. What's going on? Tell me about it."

As Fatty Ma spoke, his eyes swept over the remaining cards on the table. Then, seeing Zhuang Rui's expression, his eyes widened in surprise as he asked, "Brother Zhuang, this...this, the person who was gambling on stones just now, you weren't the one, were you?"

Zhuang Rui gave a wry smile and said, "It really is me, but I didn't make much money, only three million in total. It's not worth your time, brother."

"Hey kid... how come you're so lucky? You'd better pick out a rough stone for me later."

Fatty Ma sized Zhuang Rui up and down with his eyes, making him feel a little uneasy. No matter who it is, if they have secrets, they are always afraid of being found out. Zhuang Rui quickly said, "Brother Ma, I have no problem choosing the raw materials for you. But if we lose money, I won't be responsible."

"I'll accept the loss, but with that string of Living Buddha dzi beads you have, it'll be hard for you to lose money even if you wanted to."

Fatty Ma's words relieved Zhuang Rui. It seemed that everyone who knew him attributed his good fortune to this string of old dzi beads.

While Zhuang Rui was chatting with Fatty Ma, he didn't notice that not far from the stall, a pair of vicious eyes were staring intently at him, filled with resentment and seemingly a hint of confusion.

Xu Wei had only arrived because he heard the firecrackers. Although he was a little late, he just happened to see Zhuang Rui and Boss Qi complete the transaction of the jadeite. After asking around, he learned that Zhuang Rui had only spent 10,000 yuan and had actually won the bet. This reminded Xu Wei of the 3 million yuan he had lost gambling in Nanjing last time, and he became even more resentful towards Zhuang Rui.

"Damn it, that kid Da Biao isn't reliable either. Wasn't it said that Zhuang Rui would be bedridden for at least a month after taking that slap from him...?"

Seeing Zhuang Rui chatting and laughing so easily, without a trace of injury, Xu Wei couldn't help but think bitterly to himself.

Beside Xu Wei stood two other people. One was an elderly man in his early sixties, who was the jade gambling master from his family who was participating in the Pingzhou Jade Gambling Conference. The other was also a man with graying temples, around sixty years old, wearing a white training uniform. His

eyes darted around, exuding an indescribable aura, suggesting he was someone who had long held a high position.

"Let's go check out that betting stall where the winning numbers are. Master Zhao, I'm counting on you this time."

The old man in the white training clothes said something indifferently and walked towards where Zhuang Rui was.

This elderly man is Xu Zhendong, the current head of Xu's Jewelry. Xu's Jewelry is headquartered in Guangzhou. Originally, someone else was supposed to attend the Pingzhou Jadeite Gambling Conference, but yesterday Xu Zhendong suddenly received calls from several of his most important jadeite suppliers, demanding that they terminate the supply of jadeite raw materials without giving any reason.

Just a few months ago at the Myanmar jade auction, Xu's Jewelry also suffered a setback. They spent more than 80 million yuan on bidding for raw jade, but only recovered more than 10 million yuan of their costs. This was a huge blow to Xu's Jewelry. Compared to the more than 3 million yuan that Xu Wei lost in Nanjing, it was nothing.

Having suffered heavy losses in Myanmar, and with domestic suppliers terminating their contracts, Xu's Jewelry is about to face a shortage of raw materials. That's why Xu Zhendong personally stepped in, hoping to buy some better jadeite rough in Pingzhou to alleviate the immediate crisis.

Xu Wei is Xu Zhendong's nephew. Although some things have happened to this nephew who returned from studying abroad in the past six months, Xu Zhendong still has high hopes for him. He transferred him to the Northwest Branch, which was also intended to temper him. So at this jade gambling conference, Xu Zhendong kept Xu Wei by his side, wanting him to come into more contact with professional knowledge and colleagues in the jade industry.

"Huh? Xu Wei, why aren't you leaving yet?"

Xu Zhendong had walked seven or eight meters away when he looked back and saw Xu Wei still standing there. He couldn't help but frown.

"Oh, you're here, Uncle."

Xu Wei didn't want to go to stall number 83 at all, because that would definitely mean running into Zhuang Rui. Although Da Biao wasn't with him right now, and Xu Wei was absolutely certain that Zhuang Rui didn't know that he was the one who did what happened at the airport, as the saying goes, a guilty conscience needs no accuser, and Xu Wei still didn't want to have any direct contact with Zhuang Rui.

Zhuang Rui, who was chatting with Fatty Ma and the others, suddenly felt a gaze fixed on him. He turned around and looked outside the shed, where he met Xu Wei's eyes. The suppressed anger in Zhuang Rui's heart instantly ignited, and he stood up abruptly, shouting, "Xu Wei!"

Hearing the shout, Xu Zhendong, who was walking ahead, glanced at Zhuang Rui and said to Xu Wei behind him, "Xu Wei, is that you? If it's your friend, go and say hello. Master Zhao and I will go check on the raw materials first."

Xu Wei, who was deliberately walking behind Zhuang Rui, couldn't help but groan inwardly. Zhuang Rui still saw him. Afraid that his uncle would find out about the conflict between him and Zhuang Rui, Xu Wei gritted his teeth and walked over anyway.

"His name is Xu Wei? Hey, is he the one who plotted against you at the airport?"

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui call out the name, the third brother also stood up abruptly, his face full of anger.

The white lion seemed to sense the hostility emanating from Zhuang Rui, letting out a low growl as it stared intently at the figure that had entered.

Seeing the state of Lao San and Bai Shi, Zhuang Rui's anger subsided considerably. It wasn't that he didn't want to teach Xu Wei a lesson here, but he was afraid that Bai Shi would go berserk and tear Xu Wei apart. You see, although Bai Shi was usually very obedient, Zhuang Rui wouldn't be able to stop him if he went berserk. If that happened, it would be a loss.

"Third Brother, don't get agitated, I'll handle this myself." Zhuang Rui pressed his third brother back into his chair and walked towards Xu Wei.

"Oh, it really is President Xu! I thought I was seeing things and had mistaken him for someone else. By the way, President Xu is really dedicated. He just got off the plane yesterday and came to this trade fair today. Tsk tsk, I really admire him."

Zhuang Rui's barbed words sent a chill down Xu Wei's spine. "Could it be that he recognized me yesterday?" Looking at the several pairs of unfriendly eyes in the shed, Xu Wei regretted coming in. If a fight broke out, he was sure to suffer a loss.

Suppressing his panic, Xu Wei feigned incomprehension and said, "Boss Zhuang saw me yesterday? No way, I arrived in Guangzhou a week ago. Maybe you've mistaken me for someone else?"

Looking at Xu Wei's hypocritical face, Zhuang Rui struggled to control the urge to punch that face. He was quickly calculating how to avenge that slap.

The matter of cutting off Xu's jewelry suppliers was done by Grandpa Gu at Zhuang Rui's request, but even so, it could not eliminate Zhuang Rui's hatred for Xu Wei.

"Boss Zhuang, I still have to go select some raw materials, so I won't chat any longer. Another time when you have time, I'll treat you all to a meal together. The little misunderstandings from before are nothing." Seeing Zhuang Rui's expression shift between light and dark, Xu Wei felt uneasy and quickly chuckled before turning to leave.

"Selecting wool fabrics?"

Watching Xu Wei turn and leave, Zhuang Rui's lips curled into a smile.

Chapter 197 The Crazy Stone (Part 7)

The punch Zhuang Rui took at the airport yesterday was the biggest setback he'd ever suffered in his twenty-odd years of life. If it weren't for his keen eyesight, he probably would have been bedridden for months. And if he hadn't been struggling to find Xu Wei, Zhuang Rui probably would have gone to his door yesterday to cause trouble.

After returning to the hotel from the airport yesterday, Zhuang Rui told Grandpa Gu about the conflict between him and Xu Wei in detail.

Grandpa Gu took good care of his nephew Zhuang Rui. After hearing about what happened to Zhuang Rui at the airport, he immediately called several of the largest jade raw material suppliers in the country and cut off the raw material supply to Xu's Jewelry. Zhuang Rui was there at the time, so he guessed a bit about the purpose of Xu Wei and the others' visit today.

Zhuang Rui has never been a fan of violence since childhood. Although he has been in many fights, it was all because Liu Chuan was too impulsive and would start fighting before he could even finish a few words. As a brother, there was no reason not to help.

But more often than not, Zhuang Rui preferred to scheme behind the scenes. Only when others suffered in silence and had no way to complain could Zhuang Rui feel the pleasure of revenge.

A beating will only hurt you for ten days or half a month at most. Someone like Xu Wei will definitely never learn from a beating. Zhuang Rui had already thought of a plan in his mind, but whether it would work depended on Xu's Jewelry's desire for raw materials.

After making up his mind, Zhuang Rui said to his third brother, who was sitting in a chair with his puffed-up cheeks, "Third brother, I have a piece of raw jade in the trunk of my car. Could you get it for me? I'm on a lucky streak today, let's cut another one."

"Do you still have the mind to cut stones?"

The third brother was somewhat puzzled. Yesterday, that person's actions were purely aimed at crippling Zhuang Rui. Now that he had met his enemy, he didn't expect that Zhuang Rui would still be thinking about cutting the raw material.

If you were to ask who among Zhuang Rui's friends understands him best, besides Liu Chuan, it would be Yang Wei. Yang Wei knew about what happened at the airport yesterday, but he also knew Zhuang Rui's character well; he was definitely not the kind of person who would let a grudge go unpunished. Yang Wei noticed the sly smile on Zhuang Rui's face just now and understood a thing or two.

Having sensed something amiss, Wei Ge yelled at the third brother, "Third brother, when have you ever seen the youngest brother suffer a loss? If I tell you to go, then go. Stop talking nonsense."

Seeing that the third brother was still somewhat reluctant, Zhuang Rui said, "Third brother, go ahead, I have a plan."

Upon hearing this, the third brother realized that Zhuang Rui was planning to play dirty tricks.

You know, back in college, because there were only five boys and over forty girls in their class, they were outnumbered and outmatched. So, guys from other departments would often try to trip them up or cause trouble because of their hormones. But every time, it was those guys who suffered. Two of them even got a major demerit from the school when they were about to graduate. All those bad ideas were Zhuang Rui's.

Thinking of this, the third brother took Zhuang Rui's car keys, turned around and ran out of the shed without saying a word, not even hearing Zhuang Rui calling him from behind.

The venue was quite large, about 700 or 800 meters away from the parking lot outside. After a good 7 or 8 minutes, the third brother, covered in sweat, carried Zhuang Rui's rough jade back into the shed, leaving Zhuang Rui both amused and exasperated.

"Hey, Third Brother, what's the rush? There's a stroller here that you can push, but you insist on carrying it over."

Zhuang Rui's words made everyone laugh. This piece of rough jade was quite heavy, weighing at least forty or fifty pounds. Although Lao San was in good health, he was now out of breath from exhaustion.

"I was wondering why so many people were staring at me as I carried this wool fabric all the way here. Did they think I was a fool?" The third brother scratched his head, not angry at all, and chuckled

"Look at you, you silly thing, quickly wipe your sweat." Zhang Rong, who was standing next to her, felt sorry for you and quickly handed you a towel.

The third brother, ignoring his sweat, looked at Zhuang Rui and asked, "Young master, is there jade inside this stone of yours?"

"Who could possibly know... But since I bought it, of course I should open it and take a look. Zhuang Rui shook his head; he couldn't very well say that he could see the jade inside.

"Brother Yang, may I borrow your stone-cutting machine?"

This piece of raw jade wasn't bought from Yang Hao's stall, so Zhuang Rui needed to consult the owner first.

"I'll ask my brother, it should be fine."

Yang Jun agreed and turned to run towards the raw material area, where Yang Hao was sweating profusely as he introduced the raw materials to customers.

"Brother, you bought this rough jade with Song Jun, right? I called you to come over, but you ignored me..."

Fatty Ma asked from the side, his tone tinged with resentment, which sent a chill down Zhuang Rui's spine.

Zhuang Rui was just trying to find an excuse to deal with Fatty Ma when he saw Yang Jun return to the shed. He immediately stood up and said, "Brother Ma, I was just playing around. Hey, Yang Jun's back. Let's go get some stones cut."

"Brother Zhuang, my brother said that a customer needs to have his stone cut later. Can you guys finish cutting it after he's done?"

Yang Jun said to Zhuang Rui somewhat apologetically, "Normally, borrowing stone-cutting tools is nothing, but someone just happened to have bought rough stones and was preparing to have them cut, so Yang Hao had no choice but to prioritize his own customer."

Zhuang Rui waved his hand and said, "It's alright, let's go take a look too."

Just as Zhuang Rui and the others were about to leave the shed, Zhou Rui, who had been sitting there without saying much, spoke up: "Zhuang Rui, take the white lion over. I'll keep an eye on this piece of raw jade."

Zhuang Rui knew that Zhou Rui was worried that he would be attacked again. After hesitating for a moment, he shook his head and said, "Brother Zhou, it's okay. Third Brother is good at kung fu and can protect me. Don't worry."

"Then I'll follow you." Zhou Rui stood up and followed Zhuang Rui. What happened yesterday made Zhou Rui feel quite guilty. He felt that if he had followed Zhuang Rui, that kind of thing definitely wouldn't have happened.

Zhuang Rui smiled helplessly, hugged the white lion's big head and gave it some instructions, then walked with the others towards the stone-cutting area to watch others cut stones.

Although there were many booths at the event, each stone cutting session attracted a large number of jade merchants to watch. This is because they only purchase raw materials and generally do not participate in high-risk gambling on rough stones. If they do gamble, it is only on rough stones that have been cut open and are considered to be of high quality. Therefore, buying rough stones that others have successfully gambled on is also their main source of goods.

Upon seeing Zhuang Rui, the celebrity who had just won a bet, the crowd made way for them. Zhuang Rui went inside and was delighted. What a small world! It turned out that the people preparing to have the stone cut were none other than Xu Wei and his two companions.

Xu Zhendong gambled on a semi-gambled rough stone. The whole rough stone was somewhat shaped like a rugby ball, with pointed ends and a thick middle, weighing about 30 to 40 kilograms. In the pine flower area on the surface, there was a window the size of a baby's palm, which did reveal green. The water content was also good, but the color was a bit light, and there were some white crystalline substances mixed in with the light green, which is the presence of white cotton. Judging from its appearance, this rough stone was very ordinary.

Zhuang Rui moved forward, closer to Yang Hao, and asked, "Brother Yang, how much did they pay?"

“Three hundred thousand. By the way, Brother Zhuang, I know you have some grudges with that person. For my sake, how about we settle this somewhere else?” Yang Hao said in a low voice. He also knew Xu Wei. The stone that this sucker gambled away three million on was the one that Yang Hao sold himself.

"Don't worry, I'm here to gamble on stones, not to make enemies."

Zhuang Rui glanced at Xu Wei, who was standing not far away from him, a cold glint flashing in his eyes. Then he focused his gaze on the half-raw stone on the stone-cutting machine, releasing the spiritual energy in his eyes.

Like silk threads, a spiritual energy seeped into the surface of the raw material as Zhuang Rui looked at it, revealing a crystalline world with countless tiny particles before his eyes.

Zhuang Rui discovered that behind the skylight, there was indeed green, and the pieces were quite large. However, the green was not connected; instead, it was separated by layers of grayish-white, silky white spots. The largest piece of jade was only seven or eight centimeters in size, and its shape was not very regular. It was not even big enough to make a bracelet.

However, these jadeite pieces are of good quality, barely reaching the icy variety, with high transparency. If all of them were extracted and carved into small pendants, the initial investment of 300,000 yuan could be recouped.

This time, Master Zhao personally handled the stone cutting. A few months ago, when he went to the Myanmar jade auction, Xu's Jewelry suffered heavy losses due to his mistake, which put Master Zhao under great psychological pressure. If he lost again at this jade gambling conference, even if Xu Zhendong didn't say anything, he would have no face to stay.

For most jewelry companies in China today, they don't lack money, but rather the raw materials to make jade. So, if the rough stone that Master Zhao chose can yield jade worth no less than 300,000 yuan, then it will be considered a successful gamble.

Because this piece of jadeite contained white cotton inclusions, Master Zhao was very careful from the very beginning of polishing the stone, carefully removing the outer layer of the rough stone bit by bit. The white cotton inclusions intertwined with the jadeite inside consumed all of Master Zhao's energy.

It took more than an hour to finally extract the jade from the rough stone. Master Zhao was completely exhausted, but he was relieved that although this jade gambling trip didn't yield a huge profit, he didn't lose money at all.

After learning that the rough stone was to be cut open for personal use, the jade merchants who had been watching had long since dispersed. Zhuang Rui and the others watched for a while, but they also found it quite boring, so they went back to the shed to wait. Xu Zhendong left Xu Wei at the stone-cutting site and came to the shed chatting and laughing with Yang Hao.

"Mr. Xu, I don't know if your nephew has introduced you to him, but the person who unearthed the priceless jade in Nanjing last time is this Mr. Zhuang."

Yang Hao wasn't quite clear about the feud between Zhuang Rui and Xu Wei, but out of consideration for all guests, he introduced Zhuang Rui to Xu Zhendong.

Chapter 198 The Crazy Stone (Part 8)

"Mr. Zhuang is truly remarkable for his age. To have made a name for himself in the jade gambling world at such a young age is no easy feat.

Xu Zhendong did know something about the conflict between Zhuang Rui and Xu Wei, but of course, he didn't learn it from Xu Wei. So, although what Xu Zhendong said sounded like he was praising Zhuang Rui, he was actually implying that Zhuang Rui was young and arrogant.

"Not at all, Mr. Xu is still going strong despite his age, and his family is full of talented people. We juniors are far behind."

Zhuang Rui was naturally unwilling to back down. Since you want to protect your own, I'll curse you too. You're so old, yet you still have to personally gamble on stones. That phrase about the peak of talent is a blatant slap in the face.

Xu Zhendong smiled and didn't say anything more. At his age, arguing with Zhuang Rui, a young man in his twenties, would only make him lose face, no matter who he was. However, Xu Zhendong didn't know that the person in front of him was the culprit who cut off his company's supply of raw materials. Otherwise, he probably would have even considered fighting, let alone arguing.

"Uncle, we've cut open that rough stone, and the jade inside is of decent quality."

As the two were talking, Xu Wei helped Master Zhao in, carrying a bag in one hand, which obviously contained the jadeite material that had just been cut. As he spoke, Xu Wei opened the bag as if presenting a treasure, took out a piece of jadeite, and handed it to Xu Zhendong.

"Hmm, not bad, it's reached the icy variety. Brother Zhao, you've worked hard. Gambling on stones is all about experience. You might have a stroke of luck once, but that doesn't mean you'll be lucky forever. Xu Wei, you should learn more from your Uncle Zhao. Don't be so narrow-minded and arrogant."

Xu Zhendong was a very domineering patriarch within his family, but he was extremely protective of his own outsiders. He was currently fiddling with a piece of jade the size of a card in his right hand while lecturing Xu Wei, but his words were clearly directed at Zhuang Rui. Even Yang Hao sensed something was amiss.

"Hehe, I'm just naturally lucky. Mr. Xu, please have a seat. I'm going to cut some stones. I just cut out a piece of jade worth three million. I don't know how this rough stone is. Third Brother, could you lend me a hand and help me move the rough stone over there?"

Zhuang Rui seemed not to understand Xu Zhendong's words. He stood up with a smile and called everyone out of the shed. The third brother naturally did not let Zhuang Rui do anything. He carried the rough stone to the stone-cutting machine by himself.

"Luck? Can a person live on luck?" Xu Zhendong said disdainfully, looking at Zhuang Rui's back. The old man was of average age and had a rather big temper.

"Uncle, this kid is really lucky. Back in Nanjing, he managed to turn two pieces of scrap jade green, and one of them even made a huge profit, selling for 20 million. The rough jade he just gambled on was also unwanted by others, but he still managed to make a profit. This kid is really something else."

Although Xu Wei hated Zhuang Rui to the core, he was also very jealous of Zhuang Rui's luck.

"oh?"

Upon hearing Xu Wei's words, Xu Zhendong's eyes narrowed slightly. Although he had just said that experience was the most important factor in jade gambling, Xu Zhendong knew that jade rough was ever-changing, and no matter how much experience one had, it was far less important than luck. If this young man was really on a winning streak, it would not be a wise move for him to antagonize him.

Thinking of this, Xu Zhendong frowned and asked Xu Wei, "How did you meet this person? What caused the conflict?"

Xu Zhendong only knew that his nephew and Zhuang Rui didn't get along well when they were in Nanjing, but he didn't really know the details. This also shows Xu Zhendong's protective nature. He didn't even distinguish right from wrong before protecting his own family.

Xu Zhendong's personality, while highly supported within the family, has been detrimental to the company's development, contributing to the recent decline of Xu's Jewelry.

"It's about that British jewelry designer incident," Xu Wei said softly. Actually, that incident had nothing to do with Zhuang Rui, but Xu Wei held a grudge against everyone who was there that day.

"Let's go see if that kid's luck is really that good. If he finds jade, we can buy it." Xu Zhendong narrowed his eyes and walked out of the shed. In his opinion, the conflict between Xu Wei and Zhuang Rui was just a child's fight, and they could compromise when it came to interests.

"With this level of competence from the head of Xu's Jewelry, it seems their decline is not far off. By the way, Zhuang Rui, how did you come to have a grudge against them? This family is all petty."

Fatty Ma sidled up to Zhuang Rui and muttered something under his breath. It was rare for him to brave the sweltering heat and come out to watch Zhuang Rui polish the stone. Yanzi, who was beside him, held a flowery umbrella, but it could only cover about a third of Fatty Ma's body.

"It's alright, Brother Ma, I have no connection with them. How about I let you cut this rough stone so you can have a go at it?" Zhuang Rui didn't want to talk about this and deliberately changed the subject.

"Well... never mind, you can do it yourself, brother."

Fatty Ma was initially tempted, but after looking up at the blazing sun high in the sky, he backed down.

Zhuang Rui grinned and bent down to pick up the rough stone, securing it to the stone-cutting machine. He was just saying that, apart from Zhuang Rui himself, no matter who else tried to cut this rough stone, they would definitely gamble it away.

Zhuang Rui picked up the grinder and was about to turn it on when he saw that Lao San had also put an umbrella over his head. He quickly waved his hand and said, "Third Brother, you don't need to use an umbrella. Go and take care of your sister-in-law."

As the grinding wheel whirred, the crowd gathered again. Although it was already noon, in Pingzhou, whenever there was stone cutting, there was never a shortage of spectators.

The rough stone that Zhuang Rui bought from Boss Yu was only so-so. Its grayish-white surface was pitted and uneven, and it didn't have any pine flower or python pattern. Several people who came up to take a look shook their heads and were not optimistic about this rough stone.

As everyone knows, "pine flower" refers to the traces left on the original green of jadeite raw material that have gradually faded due to weathering. Generally, the presence of pine flower traces on the surface indicates that the rough material was once jadeite. Experienced people can judge the depth, direction, size, and shape of the green inside the rough material based on the depth, shape, direction, quantity, and density of the pine flower color.

Raw jade without moss-like patterns on its surface generally has a very low chance of yielding green jade, making this piece of raw jade appear to be a highly risky gamble in the eyes of many.

Zhuang Rui was already very familiar with the characteristics of this rough jade. The green color appeared two or three centimeters below the inconspicuous surface, and it was a bright green of icy type, which was of excellent quality and could be considered a high-grade jade. Moreover, it was a

continuous area, covering almost two-thirds of the entire area of the rough jade. So no matter where you rub it, you can basically rub out the green color.

Out of the corner of his eye, Zhuang Rui saw Xu Zhendong and Xu Wei approaching, so he started polishing the stone. It must be said that Zhuang Rui's learning ability is really strong. Although he had only cut three rough stones before in Nanjing, including the one just now, his movements were very skillful, making him look like a veteran who had been immersed in this industry for decades.

Many people think of cutting stones as something mysterious, but to put it bluntly, it's actually very simple. You just need to be bold, meticulous, and steady-handed. If you meet these three requirements, anyone can cut it. Moreover, Zhuang Rui knew exactly where the jadeite was in the rough stone and had no worries at all. If it weren't for so many people smelling and looking at it, he would have already picked out the thinnest part of the green and rubbed it.

The spot Zhuang Rui is currently rubbing is at the edge of the green area. The jadeite here has a linear shape. Zhuang Rui observed it with his spiritual energy. If you only look at this green line, which is about three fingers thick, the first impression is that the jadeite has penetrated into it, and penetrated very deeply. In the eyes of experts, this is a sign of a significant increase in value.

With the noise of the grinding wheel rubbing against the stone layer, Zhuang Rui quickly opened a small skylight in that spot. The beautiful greenery, under the sunlight, painted Zhuang Rui's face green as well.

"It went up! He won again! This kid's really lucky." The person who said this had obviously watched Zhuang Rui's first stone cutting.

"He also won the bet just now? What kind of jade was it?" The person who asked the question was naturally the one who came later.

"Hey, I said, isn't it my turn to look?"

"Hey buddy up ahead, make some space."

Zhuang Rui had gained experience in cutting stones by now. After rubbing out the small opening, he immediately stopped the grinding wheel, washed the green area with clean water, and then stood up

and stepped aside. The jade merchants waiting nearby immediately swarmed forward, and more than ten people surrounded the rough stone, making it impossible to move. Those who couldn't squeeze in kept shouting.

After seeing that Master Zhao had also squeezed in, Zhuang Rui revealed a barely perceptible sneer, thinking, "I've been waiting for you to see this."

After those who had finished looking inside made way, people immediately squeezed in from outside. It took more than ten minutes before things finally calmed down. Zhuang Rui saw Master Zhao walk up to Xu Zhendong and whisper a few words to him. Then Xu Zhendong also squeezed in to take a look. After coming out, he kept talking to Master Zhao, his expression somewhat solemn.

What puzzled Zhuang Rui was that after everyone looked at the sunroof that had been cleaned, not a single person offered a price. This made him both confused and uneasy. "Could it be that someone has noticed something?"

However, Zhuang Rui immediately refuted this point. Although the green areas had good texture and clarity, it was simply impossible to see through the jadeite with just a magnifying glass and the naked eye.

Just as Zhuang Rui was puzzled, Boss Han, the same man who had lost to Old Man Qi in the previous bidding for the rough stone, spoke up: "Young man, the appearance of this window is not bad, but could you make another cut?"

Chapter 199 The Crazy Stone (Part 9)

Seeing Zhuang Rui's confusion, the owner, Mr. Han, explained, "Young man, as you know, we're in the jade business; we only gamble on rough stones with low risk."

However, judging from the cut surface, the texture and color of this piece of rough jade are excellent. It's icy jade with a bright green color, which is considered high-grade jade. Moreover, the green is even seeping into the jade. Based on this alone, this piece of jade is worth at least five million.

However, for us, the window of opportunity is still a bit small. Betting five million would be too risky. If you can make a cut and let us see how you perform, we can afford to pay ten million, let alone five million.

Everyone nodded in agreement with what Boss Han said, and Zhuang Rui finally understood what he meant. It turned out that even if they performed well, the result of cleaning the skylight was a sin, which made these people afraid to gamble.

Zhuang Rui hadn't been in this business for very long, so there was a saying he didn't know: "A price increase doesn't count as a price increase; a price increase only counts as a price increase when it's cut open."

The more valuable the raw jade, the more attention is paid to the appearance of the cut, because a single cut often cuts deep into the jade, making its quality immediately apparent. This is the origin of the saying "one cut makes you poor, one cut makes you rich." For example, the raw jade that Zhuang Rui picked up was judged as waste by others because it had been cut.

"Make another cut?"

Zhuang Rui hesitated, because he knew that if he made a cut, he would definitely ruin the piece. The jade inside the rough stone was concentrated under the surface and its distribution was extremely strange. No matter where he cut, the rough stone would be exposed. Zhuang Rui slowly shook his head at Boss Han's suggestion.

After thinking it over for a while, Zhuang Rui said loudly, "This rough stone is a full-scale gambling stone. Now that a window has been opened, it's already a semi-gambling stone. If you're not interested, I'll sell it through a sealed bid."

During his previous conversation with Yang Hao, Zhuang Rui learned about the rules of the sealed bid at the event. All booths registered at the event could add raw materials to their sealed bids at any time. All they had to do was take a photo of the raw material to the event management office to register and get a number.

Zhuang Rui and Yang Hao have a good relationship, so Yang Hao would probably help with this, and Zhuang Rui's words were not unfounded.

"Young man, wait a little longer, let's observe further..."

After Zhuang Rui said this, several people couldn't hold back. They knew that although open bidding was also very competitive, it was still much less competitive than sealed bidding, especially for high-quality rough stones. There would definitely be many people bidding for sealed bidding, mostly investors and businessmen. These jade merchants knew that with their own strength, they would definitely be no match for those big players in the sealed bidding.

Watching Master Zhao squeeze into the crowd, Zhuang Rui thought to himself, "Should we wipe it again?" After all, five million wasn't a very high price for the current state of this rough stone, and Zhuang Rui himself wasn't very satisfied.

"Everyone, please step aside. Since you're all unsure, I'll continue wiping. If this becomes transparent, you won't be at all risk."

Hearing Zhuang Rui's words, everyone felt a little embarrassed. Their suggestions were entirely from their own perspectives. If Zhuang Rui were to make the cut as they suggested, then all the risks would fall on Zhuang Rui alone.

"Young man, there's no need to cut it into a clear piece. How about you make a small opening on the back of this rough stone?"

Boss Han leaned closer to Zhuang Rui, offered him a cigarette, and said awkwardly, "If this rough stone is fully cut open, the price will be hard to say. There are no fewer than dozens of jade merchants here, all eyeing it covetously. I, Han, dare not say that I can definitely get my hands on the cut stone."

The other onlookers shared the same sentiment as Boss Han: they wanted more of the green jade to be visible in the rough stone, reducing their risk, but they also didn't want it to become a finished piece. Even if they acquired it, the profit from processing it into jade artifacts would be very low.

"You guys have a good idea. What if the sunroof you open at the back doesn't allow for any greenery? Then the price will have to be discounted, won't it?" Zhuang Rui glanced at Boss Han and said irritably.

"Hehe, young man, even if you sell it for five million based on the performance of this skylight, you wouldn't be satisfied, would you?" Boss Han said nonchalantly, seeing Zhuang Rui's thoughtful look, he thought he had hit the nail on the head.

"Alright, I'm on a winning streak today, so I'll clean another small door. Yang Hao, you'd better get the firecrackers ready."

Zhuang Rui tossed aside his half-smoked cigarette, adopting a posture of going all in and taking a gamble.

"Youngest brother, are you confident?" The third brother had just witnessed someone else's knife cut down with one stroke, and he was filled with worry as Zhuang Rui continued to wipe.

"Hehe, Third Brother, life and death are in the hands of fate, wealth and honor are determined by heaven. If the price goes up again, this piece of rough jade will be enough for me to live on for a lifetime." Zhuang Rui's behavior at this moment was exactly like that of a gambler.

What Zhuang Rui really wanted to say was that he was counting on this piece of rough jade to buy a house. Although he had made a lot of money here and there over the past few months, compared to people like Song Jun and Fatty Ma, Zhuang Rui felt that he was too poor.

After turning the rough stone over and securing it on the stone cutting machine, Zhuang Rui started rubbing it. For others, rubbing stone is a delicate process, and they are very particular about how deep to rub, how thick to rub, and where to start. But Zhuang Rui didn't pay any attention to these things and directly picked up the grinding wheel to grind the rough stone. Everyone who saw this shook their heads. This was truly a case of ignorance being bliss.

The jadeite beneath the rough stone was very shallow. In just three to five minutes, Zhuang Rui had created a small opening the size of a palm, revealing a crystal-clear jadeite radiating a faint green light.

"Prices have gone up! They've gone up a lot! Firecrackers, where are the firecrackers?"

Yang Hao shouted excitedly, quickly parted the crowd, ran back into the shed, took out another string of firecrackers, hung them on a corner of the shed, and said to Zhuang Rui, "Brother Zhuang, your luck is amazing, no doubt about it. Judging from this, I'll have to prepare a few more strings of firecrackers later."

For a bet to go up in price, the price of the raw jade must increase dramatically. It's not enough to just see green appear when you polish it. Take Zhuang Rui's piece of raw jade, for example. Both the front and back windows have green showing, and the texture and color are almost identical. It's very likely a whole piece of jade. As a result, the price of the raw jade, which was originally worth five million, is now hard to estimate.

Amidst the deafening sound of firecrackers, the jade gambling venue became noisy again. There were quite a few people cutting stones this morning, but only five firecrackers were heard. In other words, only five rough stones were successfully gambled on in the entire morning. Among hundreds of stalls, Yang Hao had gambled twice successfully. How could he not be happy?

"Brother Yang, I can only say that your stall has good feng shui, and your bets keep going up. Hehe, I'm just a silly boy sleeping on a cold bed, relying entirely on my strong fire element. This piece of rough jade is probably enough for me to eat for the rest of my life."

As Zhuang Rui spoke, his eyes kept glancing at where Xu Zhendong was standing, and his voice was slightly louder. He believed that the Xu uncle and nephew had heard what he said.

Upon hearing this, Xu Wei looked indignant. Just as he was about to speak, Xu Zhendong stopped him. People from Guangdong are very superstitious about luck. In Xu Zhendong's view, Zhuang Rui's luck was at its peak at the moment, and if he went against him, he would definitely suffer a loss.

Now, Zhuang Rui, the owner of the rough jade, has been pushed aside by the many jade merchants. He is happy to take a break. Today's scene was indeed a bit too exciting, and Zhuang Rui is feeling a bit tired.

"Hey, Zhuang Rui, are you getting your stone cut at stall number 83? I saw someone outside who looks like you."

Just as he was drinking water and wiping his sweat, the phone in his pocket rang. Zhuang Rui answered it and heard that it was Song Jun calling. He had been looking at the raw jadeite with Master Peng and was a little late. He couldn't squeeze in at all.

"Yeah, Brother Song, I've unearthed the raw jade we bought from that house the other day, and it's worth a fortune! Come on in and take a look!" Zhuang Rui said, feigning excitement.

"Damn it, I must have been out of my mind today. Why didn't I take you with me?"

At this moment, Song Jun was filled with regret. He knew that Zhuang Rui was wearing a Living Buddha Dzi bead bracelet and was having such good luck that he was practically burning with joy. Yet he had still gone off to select raw materials. After hanging up the phone, Song Jun and Master Peng desperately squeezed into the crowd.

"Zhuang Rui, you'd better help me pick out a rough stone later, damn it, I really need to get an old dzi bead." Song Jun squeezed in and said the same thing as Fatty Ma.

"And that young man? I'll offer twelve million for this rough stone, what do you think?"

Before Zhuang Rui could reply, Boss Han's voice rang out as he searched around for Zhuang Rui.

"Twelve million?"

Song Jun's eyes widened in disbelief. He had initially thought Zhuang Rui was joking when he said he would gamble away a villa, but it turned out to be true.

"Thirteen million, I'll offer thirteen million."

"Thirteen and a half million, young man, think it over."

Although Zhuang Rui was nowhere to be seen, it didn't stop the jade shop owners from bidding against each other. However, to Zhuang Rui's disappointment, Xu Zhendong was still whispering to Master Zhao and didn't join in.

"Not bad. The windows on both sides are full of bright green icy jadeite. The color is very even and the transparency is also very high. It is very likely to be a whole piece of jadeite material. It's worth a gamble." After examining the rough stone, Master Peng walked to Song Jun's side and said, while holding up two fingers to show Song Jun.

"Brother, let me help you raise the price."

Song Jun smiled at Zhuang Rui and immediately shouted, "I'll offer eighteen million!"

Chapter 200 The Crazy Stone (Part 10)

"Brother Song, don't joke around with your little brother..."

This time, Zhuang Rui's eyes widened in disbelief. He had mentally valued this rough stone at 15 million, and now Song Jun was offering 18 million! If the jade inside was as visible through the window, that would be one thing, but the problem was, this entire rough stone was a counterfeit!

Song Jun has always been on good terms with him, and he has troubled him with many small favors. If Song Jun really wins the bid for this rough stone, Zhuang Rui will feel embarrassed to take his money. Of course, even if Song Jun wins the bid, he won't cut the stone. He will definitely hoard it for a few years before selling it, in order to avoid losing money.

The price offered by Song Jun instantly silenced the previously noisy venue. Eighteen million was not a low price. Even in a sealed auction, excluding a few top-tier rough stones, this price would definitely rank among the top three.

"Hehe, Brother Zhuang, others can buy it, but I can't. Sigh, why didn't I take a liking to this rough stone back then? I overlooked things right under my nose. Master Peng, I'm not talking about you, but back then we were only looking at semi-gambling stones."

After complaining for a while, Song Jun noticed that Master Peng's expression wasn't very good, so he quickly offered some words of comfort. In his previous words, he had included Master Peng in his complaint as well.

"Mr. Song, even if we look at all the rough stones, I still wouldn't choose this one." After hearing Song Jun's words, Master Peng felt relieved and said with a wry smile.

Song Jun nodded and said, "That's true. The surface of this rough stone is indeed not very good. Brother, how did you choose such a rough stone? And you even managed to make a huge profit from it... Come on, don't say anymore. It must be that string of old dzi beads that brought you good luck."

"Brother Song, you know I'm short on money, so I only buy cheap rough stones. If I win, I make money; if I lose, so be it. But I've been pretty lucky, haha. 600000.000"

Zhuang Rui was dismissive of Song Jun's words. If the old dzi beads could really bring people such luck, then spending a few million to get a string of them would surely bring good luck every day.

On another note, if this old dzi bead were really that effective, he wouldn't have gotten punched at the airport. Thinking of this, Zhuang Rui felt a bit itchy and couldn't help but look towards where Xu Wei and the others were standing.

Upon closer inspection, Zhuang Rui noticed that only Xu Wei was standing there, while Xu Zhendong and Master Zhao had gone to examine Zhuang Rui's jadeite. Not only Xu Zhendong and Master Zhao, but also seven or eight jade merchants were gathered around the rough stone. They didn't seem to care much about the price that Song Jun had offered earlier.

It's worth noting that the two windows cut into Zhuang Rui's rough jade are exceptionally well-made, revealing green hues on both pieces. These are bright green icy jadeite pieces, and a bracelet made from such jadeite would be pure in color and crystal clear. Apart from glassy, fully green jadeite, it would be considered a top-quality bracelet, capable of fetching millions of yuan.

This rough stone weighs 52 kilograms. Green appears after rubbing down about two or three centimeters on both sides. This means that there is a high probability that there is a whole piece of jade inside. Furthermore, it can be observed from the windows on both sides that the color and texture of this whole piece of jade are very uniform. If everyone is not mistaken, it is not a big problem to take out 20 or 30 kilograms of icy green jade from this rough stone.

As mentioned above, a single bracelet can sell for over a million yuan. How many bracelets can be made from a rough stone weighing twenty or thirty kilograms and bundled together? Those present had already made a clear estimate in their minds, but based on this calculation, the actual value of this rough stone is no less than twenty million yuan.

Furthermore, the hollowed-out areas of the bracelet can be carved into numerous pendants and other ornaments, and these trinkets are quite expensive, costing at least eight or nine thousand to tens of thousands of yuan. As a result, the price of this rough stone has skyrocketed. Song Jun's earlier bid was merely a bit aggressive, but it wasn't enough to intimidate these experts.

"Young man, I'll offer twenty million for this rough jade..."

"Twenty-five million, Mr. Han, you're not on a winning streak today, so don't get involved."

"Bullshit, I haven't gone bankrupt yet. You're the one who just lost a piece, didn't you? Twenty million eight hundred thousand."

"Twenty-one million? I say, you two stop arguing. My company is currently short of some good materials, so give them to me."

After about seven or eight minutes, the people surrounding the raw material dispersed, and a new round of bidding started with Mr. Han, creating another climax.

Everyone wore a fanatical expression, determined to acquire the rough stone. Even Xu Zhendong's gaze towards Zhuang Rui seemed to carry a hint of flattery, though he hadn't yet made a bid.

This is not Xu Zhendong's fault. Xu's Jewelry was founded before the liberation and is considered an old-brand jewelry company in China. In the early 1990s, it developed rapidly. However, since Xu Zhendong took over the family business in the mid-1990s, due to several misjudgments, the company's business has shrunk and its current situation is not as good as before.

This year, Xu's Jewelry has been hit even harder. The failure of the Myanmar jade auction has not only caused huge losses to the company, but has also left its high-end products facing a shortage of raw materials. In addition, suppliers of ordinary raw materials are terminating their supply contracts. Xu's Jewelry is now in dire straits. If it weren't for the remaining funds from the past, its branches across the country would probably be facing a shortage of stock.

Those in the jade business know that while low-grade jade items are the easiest to sell, the profit margin isn't very high. Selling hundreds of low-grade jade items in a month might not even generate as much

profit as selling three to five high-grade jadeite pieces. Furthermore, whether a store has good stock is also a way for others to gauge the overall strength of your company.

The old man's move to cut off the supply line from the bottom could not actually shake the foundation of Xu's Jewelry. Although the old man had a wide circle of friends, merchants have always been profit-driven. As long as Xu's Jewelry offered a high price, the supply of low-grade jadeite raw materials should not be a problem. However, the raw materials for high-grade jadeite cannot be provided by those rough jadeite merchants. This must be resolved by the various jadeite gambling venues themselves.

Xu Zhendong hadn't expected that the kid he had just ridiculed would actually cut out a high-quality piece of raw jade so quickly. He was filled with regret, fearing that Zhuang Rui would reject his offer, which was why he hadn't made a bid yet.

If Zhuang Rui knew what Xu Zhendong was thinking, he would probably be even more frustrated. "I was just waiting for you to bid," he thought, so after seeing Xu Zhendong's look, he returned a smile.

Zhuang Rui's attitude greatly encouraged Xu Zhendong. At this moment, in his eyes, Zhuang Rui had transformed from an ignorant and reckless young man into a sensible and capable young man who knew when to advance and retreat. Without further hesitation, Xu Zhendong shouted, "Xu's Jewelry bids twenty-three million!"

Xu Zhendong called out the company's name for two reasons. First, to tell everyone that he was determined to get this rough jade, and that anyone who disagreed could compare it themselves, while those weaker than him should not get involved. Second, he had some jade merchants he was on good terms with, and this was also a way of asking them for favors. He believed that favors should be repaid later, and everyone has times when they encounter difficulties.

"Han's Jewelry has offered 25 million yuan!"

Xu Zhendong is not the only powerful jewelry company. This plump, fair-skinned Mr. Han is none other than Han Haowei, the owner of Han's Jewelry, which has been making waves in recent years. The scarcity of high-grade jadeite raw materials is a problem faced by many jewelry companies today, so Mr. Han will not give up on this rough stone easily.

On the other hand, the Song army has ceased its activities. He doesn't cut the stones; he's just hoarding them. If the price is too high, he won't make a move. Although he's optimistic about the future of the jade market, it would be unwise to put all his money into a few rough stones.

Song Jun raised 80 million yuan to make a good deal at this jade gambling conference. He had just looked at a few rough stones and estimated their value at over 30 million yuan. Naturally, he was unwilling to invest so much in Zhuang Rui's rough stone, since he hadn't even looked at the sealed bids from many other stalls yet.

"Little Han, you guys made quite a haul at the Myanmar jade auction last time, and now you're trying to snatch this piece of rough jade from this old man?" Now, only Xu Zhendong and this Boss Han are left to bid.

"Mr. Xu, you're a senior, you know the market situation, nobody has any surplus grain..."

Han Haowei was equally unwilling to back down. Gambling on stones is inherently risky, with nine out of ten attempts ending in failure. Considering the entire stone gambling event, it was unlikely that a better rough stone would appear. Naturally, Boss Han was not willing to give in.

"Good, young man, you've got guts! I'll bid 27 million!" Xu Zhendong laughed heartily, raising the price by another 2 million. This was his way of showing the other party that Xu's Jewelry was determined to get this rough stone.

Mr. Han hesitated. After all, this rough stone was not an exposed one. Although the gamble was not great, there was still a risk. The price of 27 million was not low. Of course, if the inside of this rough stone was as good as the outside, then 27 million would be well worth it.

"Twenty-eight million!"

Boss Han gritted his teeth and added another million, but in terms of momentum, he was already weaker than Xu Zhendong.

Thirty million!!!

Xu Zhendong refused to back down and immediately raised the price by another two million.

"My God, this piece of rough jade is definitely going to be the top lot of the day."

"Even a starved camel is bigger than a horse; Xu's Jewelry still has considerable strength."

Immediately, the onlookers began to discuss the matter, and in such a setting, bidding up prices was, to some extent, free publicity for their own companies.